

April 5th 1788

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This day being present wth Mr. G. Stroake
a Bricker. y^e Dr. Faircloth & J^r here before
examined, & who had been lame, & gone upon
crutches between 7 & 8 years, having been
thrice entertained in St. Bartholomews Hospital
but at last receiving any amendment. I was
informed by y^e patient, y^e he had been once
stroaked before on Tuesday last wth most sudden
& wonderfull reliefe, & y^e yet his paines though
uncomparably lesse then before being not quite
removed he came to be stroaked againe, wth I
having desired y^e he might be, Mr. G. began to
stroake his shank, where y^e patient complained
of a paine, wth by his stroaking being as the
Bricker says presently removed into his elbow
& thence ~~into~~ ^{to} his w^{re}st hand. I took Mr.
G.'s Glove, & wth was thick & sought, & turning
y^e inside outwards stroaked there wth y^e Arm, &
(as I shew) wth in a minute of an hour done
y^e paine as y^e Bricker told me quite his w^{re}st
where he says it much affected him, then stroaking
y^e part also wth y^e Glove, he told me felt a sharp
paine in y^e middle joints of his finger & wth
stroaking those parts also. he says he felt it ex-
ceeding sorely wth his hand, wth being likewise
stroaked he says his paine was quite gone fro^m his
hand, arme, & hand.

Mr. G. having also stroaked his hip for an
inordinate Syatica done as y^e Bricker says a
violent paine into y^e back part of his shank
thigh, whence Mr. G. letting me have y^e same
glove againe, I expelled it into his knee, where he
says it was very violent, thence he says he felt

Relay of Mr.
Gotticks stroaking.

it skip into his sheenes, & thence by y^e same
way I shal shew it into his ankle & firste
where he complained y^t it was very greivous
whence having strook it to y^e back of his foot
he sd it was there more tormenting, then over
by his toching y^e moanes seemed to be more
I said I sd by stroaking I s^d order y^e paine
(as he sayd) toward y^e extreme part of his foot
he appeared to be more tormented then ever, &
expressed an impatience y^t at my delaying to
stroke y^t I might inquire wth manner of paine
he felt, & how intense, & it seemed to me but I
am not sure of it; y^t wth he sd y^e paine way
came into his foot there was a visible altera-
tion in some of them, afterward by stroaking the
extremity of his toes both above & below wth y^e
glove; especially y^t part wth he had been contiguous to
y^e palmes of m^r G^t Lenn as well as mine) as when
his heels into wth he complained some paine. Then
be driven, he affirmed y^t paine to be quite
stroake away.



Apr: 10th
1666.

This night one Mr Carrington
Scivener living near Charing-Crosse
was sent for by Dr Sydenham to my
chamber to try whether he could ⁵³supra
y efficacy of Mr G^r ham. This Scivener
being a noted person & particularly for
his having been many years lame, he
came but slowly & in pain, told my
foot boy who was sent for him, & he
came only to comply wth Dr. & not
expecting to receive any Benefit by Mr
G^r, being come into y^e Room, I desired
him to sit downe & uncover his knee, bec.
I thought Mr. G^r having been informed y^e there
was a dislocation in his Hip told him he
pretended not to cure him of y^e Infirmitie
yet he (Mr G^r) made no doubt to ease him
of y^e paine he usually & at that time also
had in his knee & accordingly Mr G^r having
stroak his knee a little, though for about halfe
an minute he says he felt y^e paine to continue
yet wth in about a minute more as I pressed
being stroak at severall times y^e first
to remove y^e paine, & y^e second to confirme
wth he had first done & to strengthen y^e part
y^e patient affirm to me y^e he then felt
noe paine at all; & also assure me y^e
my questioning it y^e he was in actnall
paine when he sat downe to be stroak
(having like wise affirm to y^e writer
of this y^e being in walking to Mr Dr: y^e
paine had made him sweat) being
desired by me to walk, about because
he says y^e walking was apt to put out a paine
he took divers times in y^e morning & evening
more y^e only

April 13th

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This day ^{George} a woman came among other patients to be cured of a great thicknesse of hearing she complained of, & he having put his fingers in her ears, and (as I remember) a little strook them she complained no more of her deafnesse, but a great pain & resided in the fore part of her head where having strook her, he presently dytrodged & pain, & after having chopd it from place to place about her head, as she informed us, at length she told us of both her pain & of deafnesse were gone, & when I asked her how long she had bin so long bin for thick of hearing, she innocently answered me ever since the birth of her first child, & when I smilingly demanded at how it was since she was brought in bed of her first child, she said about a year & a quarter, and affirming her self to be recovered of the same to my satisfaction to be, she went away joyful.

Another woman who stood by her was likewise of same time cured, as she professed, of a great & obdurate pain in her head, by Mr G. his hand being layd on the upper part of her head, the pain remoynd to other parts thereof, & sometimes to her neck, after which she complained it was got into her eyes, at which time observing them attentively, her eyelids beamed much, & seemed to me to have very many little convulsive motions, which being strook went away, & the woman professed her self to be freed from her pain; but desired him to cure her of a great noise she had in her ears, to which part having applyd his fingers, she presently told him, that after a few minutes the troublesome sound was gone, & afterwordes assured me she heard as indistinctly as ever.

Easter day
1666

Some howers agoe Mr G. & I being discoursing in my Chamber a Servant of my Sister Harborough, who has been taken notice of as much disposed to believe of G. Cures, came to my doore & spoke to me in a halfe

of my sister's Woman (mrs Margaret Manning)
who having this day had a tedious & violent fit
of y^e head Ach, & at length forced her to go downe
on y^e Bed for a little ease, was by one of her
fellow servants perswaded to have recourse to
me & who at my desire ^{to rise up} told her in y^e asking
her where shee felt y^e paine y^e ^{ch the top of her} greivous, layd his hand on y^e fore part of her
head where y^e was fixed, & then demanding
where shee felt it, shee answered y^e it was
still in y^e same place, where upon stroaking
her forehead a little, when shee was asked
where it was now shee pointed at y^e middle
part of her head, upon ^{ch} laying his hand
her hood being on & stroaking a little, shee
sayd shee felt noe paine, but a little giddyness
& some kind of trembling, where upon stroak-
ing againe a little up about y^e middle of her
head wth out taking of her hood, shee said to
feele some little paine one one side of her
neck, where his hand persueing it shee pre-
sently declared to me y^e shee was quite well
& being desired to walke about a little
& whether shee were assured shee felt none
shee answered affirmatively, & when her need
very well satisfied, leaving me & to returne
his discourse, wth hee persued as unconcerned
as if nothing had happened at all to interrupt
it. After this wee were called to supper, & our
G. ~~sate~~ sate wth us about an hower after
supper, & then casually meeting y^e Patient shee
told me y^e shee had not since any paine
at all.

Wth we were going to sit downe to
supper my younger neice, being miste, &
my sister having asked why shee came not
downe, & beeing answered y^e shee was troubled
wth a violent head ach. I desired shee might be
made downe to be touched by mr. J. who laying
his hand on her forehead, where shee sayd her paine
was, & being asked how shee did sayd y^e y^e paine was
lesse, but her head made a very giddy, whereupon he layd
his hand on y^e middle of her head, but would not touch it
because of her peake, shee seemed to think y^e reme-

but y^e paine was quite gone.
Apr. 16. My wife is asking my neeces at suppers how shee had done since mr. J. took her head
ho presently referred her to her paine, soe shee had since had noe head ach, but a sickness in her stomach
before hee touched her, & having offered my sister Woman how shee did, shee replied y^e shee was better
her paine in her shoulder, & after weate amongst her fingers shee was much as before as for her throat
only face no paine in her head, & agrees very well to it. y^e feet as before as for her throat, say, muchly y^e since
went out at y^e small place as y^e fingers does on eyes, shee showed quickly how of it againe somewhat else but not
in her head.

April 15

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Mr G. told me that usually those that were subject to the falling sickness as soon as ever he comes near them, & before he touches them, fall into a fit, and that when he strokes them, they come to themselves for the most part, & if they regain use enough of their senses to be able to tell him where they feel the pain, he then relieves them as he does other Patients, by changing the pain from place to place till he have driven it quite away. But if they recover not sense enough to tell him where the pain is, is sometimes does as it were hide it self for the present, but is not quite expell'd. He thinks most Epileptick Persons to be Demoniack, notwithstanding that I could say to the contrary; & related to me of in the presence of many eminent Persons whom he named, & one of whom being told that I knew him, he desired to offer about the truth of it. Many Lancians could a good number of Epileptick Persons to be brought before he came to them in a place by themselves, when he came near they and all of them in a very short time fall into fits, & one of them into supercardious ones.

He tells me that in fits of the mother his hand being apply'd to the stomach of the Patient there is usually felt a pain in some particular part, and that he follows it, or in other cases, from place to place till it be quite expell'd, but says that sometimes the pain is in the neck, & hysterical fits terminate, in a swelling of the throat with a threatening of suffocation very manifest to the eyes of the beholders, & the matter of cause the pain sometimes seems to the Patient to grow out

to goe out of my mouth like something extremely
cold, & if he himself ~~so~~ ^{had} more than felt
that coldness they ~~can~~ ^{are} complaind of, it makes
me remember of an ^{old} woman whom I saw him
curing of an ancient lameness, and
complaint of he had driven by pain from her
thigh & knee into her foot, when I asked her
if she felt there, she very seriously affirmed to
me of ^{the} much pain she felt a coldness
as if cold water (for ^{that} was her expression)
was poured upon the bottom of her toes.

He likewise answered me by he had oftentimes
cured wounds almost as strangely as other
diseases, & not only by ^{contact} laying on of his
hand presently takes off the pain of it then
but then by barely laying his hand on the bed-
clothes where the Patient lay he has performed
the same thing. of w^{ch} he named me an eminent
instance in a known Person.



Greatrahes 74

The Transcript of
Robert Boyle's
Workdiary, Volume 26

Accounts of cures performed by
Valentine Greatrakes
during his visit to England in 1666;
some witnessed by Robert Boyle himself
and some recounted to him by those healed.

Originally recorded:
10 – 16 April 1666

Source:
British Library,
Add. MS 4293, fols. 50-3

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[Date: 6 April 1666]

[Note: Written in the margin, parallel to the spine of the volume, is the endorsement, in William Wotton's hand, '1666 Relations of Mr Gretricks's stroaking', and in Henry Miles' hand, adjacent to title, 'Mr Boyles autograph'.]

This day being present when Mr G. stroakd a Tincker that Dr Fairecloth & I had before examind, & who had been lame & gone upon Crutches betweene 7 & 8 year, having been thrice entertaind in St. Bartholomews hospital without at last receiving any amendment, I was informd by the patient, that he had been once stroackd before on Tuesday last with most suddaine & wonderfull releife, & that yet his paines though incomparably lesse then before being not quite removd he came to be stroakd againe, which I having desird that he might be, Mr G. began to stroak his shoulder, where the patient complaind of a paine, which by his stroacking being as the Tincker sayd presently removd unto his Elbow & thence <toward> his hand, I tooke Mr G.'s Glove, which was thick & sought, & turning the inside outward stroakd therewith the <affected> Arme, & (as I ghesse) within a minute of an hower drove the paine as the Tincker told me into his wrest where he sayd it much afflicted him; then stroaking that part also with the Glove, he told me felt a sharp paine in the middle joynts of his fingers, & stroaking those parts also he sayd he felt it exceding uneasy under his Nailes, which being likewise stroakd he sayd his paine was quite gone from his shoulder, arme, & hand Mr. G. having also stroakd his hip for an moderate Cyatica drove as the Tincker sayd a a violent paine into the back part of his the thigh, whence Mr G. letting me have the same glove againe, I expelld it into his knee, where he sayd t'was very violent, thence he sayd he felt

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it skip into his sheenes, & thence by the same way I ['cha' deleted] chasd it into his ankle & Instep, ['he' deleted] whence he complaind that it was very greivous whence having stroakd it to the roots of his Toes he said it was the[altered from 'they'] more tormenting['r' inserted] then ever & by his looks & moanes seemd[altered from 'sh'] be much disorderd, & when by stroaking I drove['s' at end of word deleted] the paine (as he sayd) toward the extreme parts of his Toes he appeard to bee more tormenteed[correct reading is tormented] then ever, & expressd an Impatience that at my delaying to stroake that I might inquiero what manner of paine he felt, & how Intense, & it seemd to me but I am not sure of it, that when he said the paine was come into his Toes there was a visible alteration in some of them, afterward by stroaking the Extreamitys of his Toes both above & below with the glove, especially that part which had been contiguous to the palme of Mr G's hand ['as well as mine' deleted]) as also his heele into which he complaind some paine had be[correct reading is been] driven, he affirmd that paine to be quite stroakd away.

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[Integral marginalia:] Apr.: 10th 1666

This night one Mr [space of 4-5 characters] CaringtonScivener[correct reading is scrivener] liveing near Charing-Crosse was sent for by Dr Sydnham to my chamber to try whether he could disprov the efficacy of Mr G.'s hand; This Scrivener being a noted person & particularly for his having been many years lame he came but slowly & in paine

<&> told my footboy who was sent for him, that he came only to comply with the Dr without expecting to receive any Benefit by Mr G., being come into the Roome I desired him to sit[‘i’ altered from ‘e’] downe & uncover his knee, bec. that though Mr. G. having been informd that there was a dislocation in his Hip told him he pretended not to cure him of that Infirmary yet he (Mr G.) made noe doubt to ease him of the paine he usually & at that time also had in his Knee & accordingly Mr G. having stroakd his Knee a litle, though for about halfe a minute he sayd he felt the paine to continue yet within about a minute more as I ghesd being stroakd[‘c’ between ‘a’ and ‘k’ deleted] at 2 severall times the first to remove the paine, & the second to confirme what he had first done & to strengthen the part the patient affirmd to me that he then felt noe paine at all; & also assurd me upon my questioning it that he was in actuall paine when he sate downe to be stroakd (having likewise affirmd to the writer of this that [‘his p’ deleted] in walking to Mr Gr: the paine had made him sweat,) being desired by me to walk about because he sayd that walking was apt to put <him> into paine he tooke divers moves in the adjoyning Parlour

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freedome from paine 53 year: & when he told me that he <had>[replacing ‘could’] walkd[‘d’ at end of word inserted] whist[correct reading is whilst] I was talking with G. without the help of the staffe he leand upon coming hither, & I objected that neverthelesse I saw it in his hand he repleyd[‘pleyd’ altered from ‘played’] that he had not indeed layd it aside, but had not made use of it, which [‘one that’ deleted] my neece that was with him in Parlour confirmd to me: he seemd to be much affected with the chang that was wrought

in him, & declard that he thankd God first & next that he thought himselfe obleigd to thank Mr G. as his Instrument & when he went away gave thanks to us & particularly to me that had helpd him to this releife, & would have left with some of the house a gratuity for Mr. G: which would not be receivd. Note. that Mr. G. told him that in regard his paine went not oute at his Toes, it was but dispersd or [~~'conceald'~~] made to lurke & would trouble him againe [~~'&'~~] & that the removall of the paine [~~'was done in the'~~] & the Acknowledgment of it by the Scrivener was done in the presence of Dr Sydnham as well as in the presence of my Sister R. Dr Whitscock & Dr Fairecloth who then happend to be in my chamber.

This same night there came to him one Mrs Story (that was lately my Landlady[second 'a' altered from 'y']) bringing with her her boy betweene[altered from 'of'] 6 & 7 years of Age, who about a year [~~'& a ha'~~] agoe after having been sick of the small pox had a defluxion on one of his Eys, [~~'but'~~] which swelld the parts about it, & seemd to have impaired the Eye itselfe. for when we would have lookd narrowly into it the child who as his mother told us was not able to endure the light of the candle could not hold it open & cryd much out of an unwillingnesse to have it meddled with, but after much adoe, the candle being held behind his head, he soe farr opend his Eye that Mr. G. could spit into it, which he did & rubd it a litle with his finger, after which the child being askd how he did complaind he felt paines & pricking in the parts about the Eye especially as I ghesd about the Temporall Muscle, which Mr G. having stroakd 3. or 4. times over with his fingers (which I think tooke not halfe a minute. the boy being againe askd whether he felt any paine answerd that he did [[approximately 15 characters] [tell][unclear] [approximately 5 characters] [which][unclear] [approximately 12 characters] [gone][unclear]]largely illegible due to damage caused by bottom of page cut off]

Aprill the 13th

This day a <yonge> woman came among other Patients to be curd of a great thicknesse of hearing she complaind of, & he haveing put his fingers in her ears, and (as I remember) a litle strookd them, she complaind no more of her deafnesse, but a great pain that resided in the fore part of her Head, where haveing strookd her, he presently dislodgd the pain, & after haveing chasd it from place to place about her Head, as she informd us, at length she told us that both her pain & the deafnesse were gone, & when I askd her how long she had ['bin soe long' deleted] bin soe thick of hearing, she innocently answerd me ever since the birth of her first child, & when I smileing demaunded how <long> it was since she was brought in Bed of her first child, she said about a year & a quarter, and affirming her self to be recoverd, as she seemd to the by-standers to be, she went away joyfull.

Another woman that stood by her was likewise at the same time curd, as she professd, of a great, & obstinate pain in her Head, by Mr G. his hand which being layd on the upper part of her Head, the pain removd to other parts thereof, & sometimes to her neck after which she complaind that it was got into her eyes, at which time observeing them ['dila' deleted] attentively, her eyelidds tremld much, & seemd to me to have very many little convulsive motions, which by being stroakd went away, & the woman professd her self to be <quite> freed from her pain; but desird him to cure her of a great noyse ['she' deleted] she had in her ears, to which part haveing applyd his fingers, she presently told him, ['at & after assurd

me,' deleted] that the troublesome sound was gone, & afterwards
assurd me she heard as undisturbdly as ever. [Integral marginalia:]

Easter day 1666

Some hower's agoe Mr G. & I being discoursing in my Chamber a
servant of my sister Ranalaughs, who has been taken notice of as
much indisposd to beleive Mr G. Cures, came to the doore & spoke
to me, in the behalfe

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of my sisters Woman (Mrs Margeret Manning) who having this day
had a tedious & violent fit of the head Ach, which at length forcd
her to lye downe on the Bed for a litle ease, was by one of her fel-
low servants perswaded <to rise & ['to' deleted]> to have recourse
to Mr G. who at my desire calld her in & asking her where shee
felt the paine that which[altered from 'was'] <she told us was> soe
greivous, layd his hand on the fore part of her head where that
was fixd, & then demanding where she felt it, she answerd that
it was still in the same place, where upon stroaking her forehead
a litle, when['w' altered from 'h'] she was askd where it was now
she pointed at the midle part of her head, upon which laying his
hand her hood being on & stroaking a litle, she sayd she felt noe
paine, but a litle giddynes & some kind of trembling, where upon
stroaking againe a litle ['up' deleted] about the middle of her head
without takeing of her hood, she seemd to feele some litle paine
on['e' at end of word deleted] one side of her neck, where his
hand persueing it she presently declard to me that she was quite
well & being desird to walke about a litle & whether she were

assurd she felt none she answerd <me> affirmatively, & when[correct reading is went?] her way very well satisfyd, leaving Mr G. to resume his Discourse, which he persued as unconcernedly as if nothing had happend at all to interrupt it. After this we were calld to supper, & Mr G. [‘so b’ deleted] sate with us about an hower after supper, & then casually meeting the Patient she told me that shee had not since any paine at all.

When we were goeing to sit downe to supper my younger neece being missd, & my sister having askd why she came not downe, & been answerd that she was troubled with a violent head ach, I desird she might be invited downe to be touchd by Mr G. who laying his hand on her forehead, where she sayd her pain was, & being askd how she did sayd that the paine was lessend, but her head made very giddy, whereupon he layd his hand on the middle of her head, but could not touch it because of her peake, she seemed to think the remnant [text begins in left-hand margin]of her paine removd to another part of her head the giddynesse continuing, & his hand being applyd thereabouts as well as the dresse of her head would permit, she told me that she felt her head as she imagin'd full of fumes but the paine was quite gone.

Apr. 1[‘6’ deleted]6. This night asking my neece at suppertime how shee had done since Mr G. stroakd her head, she informd us that as he presently releivd her of her paine soe shee had since had noe headach, but a sickishnes in her stomach which she had before he stroakd her, & having afterwards askd my sister Woman how she did, she replyd that [‘[since][unclear]’ deleted] yesternight, she felt her paine in her shoulder, which after went away, but since she was touchd, which was above 24 howers before she had been very free from paine in her head, which agrees very well with what Mr G. foretold as soone as he had stroakd her, namely that since went

not out at the usuall places as the fingers Toes or Eyes, she should quickly hear of it againe somewhere else but not in her head.

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[text begins in body of page] Aprill the 15

Mr G. told me that usually those that were subject to the Falling sicknesse as soon as ever he comes neer him, & before he touches them, fall into a fit, and that ['he' deleted] when he stroakes them, they come to themselves for the most part, & if they regain use enough of their senses to be able to tell him where they feel the pain, he then releives them as he dos other Patients, by chaseing the paine from place to place till he have driven it quite away, but if they recover not sense enough to tell him where the pain is, is[correct reading is it] oftentimes does as it were hide it self for the present, but is not quite expeld. He thinks most Epileptick Persons to be Demoniacks notwithstanding what I could say to the contrary; & related to me that in the presence of divers eminent Persons whom he namd, & one of which being told that I knew him, he desird me to aske about the truth of the story, haveing causd a good number of Epileptick Persons to be brought before he came to them in a place by themselves, when he came neer they did all of them in a very short time, fall into Fitts, & one of them into stupendious ones.

He tells me that in Fitts of the Mother his hand being applyd to the stomach of the ['Person' deleted] Patient there is usually felt a pain in some particular parts, and that he follows it, as in other cases, from place to place till it be quite expeld, but sayes that oftentimes the pains in which he makes the Histericall fitts terminate, invade the

throate with a threatening of suffocation very manifest to the eyes of the beholders, & that the matter that causes the pain oftentimes seems to the Patient

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to goe out of the mouth like something extreemly cold, & that he himself ['do' deleted] has now & than felt that coldnesse they ['com' deleted] complained of, which makes me remember that an <ould> woman whom I saw him cureing of an auncient lamenesse, and complained that he had driven the pain from her thigh & knee into her foot, when I askd her what she felt there, she very seriously affirmd to me that with much pain she felt a coldnesse, as if cold water (for that was her expression) was pourd upon the bottome of her toes.

He likewise answerd me that he had oftentimes curd wounds almost as strangely as other distempers, & that not only the <contact>[replacing 'laying on'] of his hand presently takes off the pain of ['it' deleted] them, but that by barely laying his hand on the Bedclothes where the Patient layes, he ['los' deleted] performs the same thing, of which he namd me an eminent instance in a knowne Person.

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